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UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA, OAKLAND DIVISION

CHASOM BROWN, WILLIAM BYATT,
JEREMY DAVIS, CHRISTOPHER
CASTILLO, and MONIQUE TRUJILLO,
individually and on behalf of themselves and
all others similarly situated,

Plaintiffs,

vs.

GOOGLE LLC,

Defendant.

Case No. 4:20-cv-03664-YGR-SVK

**GOOGLE LLC'S ADMINISTRATIVE
MOTION TO SEAL PORTIONS OF THE
PARTIES' JOINT EXHIBIT LIST**

Judge: Hon. Yvonne Gonzalez Rogers

Case No. 4:20-cv-03664-YGR-SVK

GOOGLE LLC'S ADMINISTRATIVE MOTION TO SEAL
PORTIONS OF THE PARTIES' JOINT EXHIBIT LIST

I. INTRODUCTION

Pursuant to Civil Local Rules 7-11 and 79-5, Defendant Google LLC (“Google”) respectfully seeks to seal certain portions of the Parties’ Joint Exhibit List (filed in unredacted form at Dkt. 1054-1), which contains non-public, highly sensitive and confidential business information that could affect Google’s competitive standing and may expose Google to increased security risks if publicly disclosed, including details related to Google’s internal projects, identifiers, data signals, source code files, and logs, as well as internal metrics, which Google maintains as confidential in the ordinary course of its business and is not generally known to the public or Google’s competitors. This information is highly confidential and should be protected.

This administrative motion pertains to the following information contained in the Joint Exhibit List:

Document	Portions to be Filed Under Seal	Party Claiming Confidentiality
Joint Exhibit List	Highlighted Portions at: pp. 1–3, 6–26, 28–29, 38–41, 63–64	Google

II. LEGAL STANDARD

A party seeking to seal material must “establish[] that the document, or portions thereof, are privileged, protectable as a trade secret or otherwise entitled to protection under the law” (*i.e.*, is “sealable”). Civ. L.R. 79-5(b). The sealing request must also “be narrowly tailored to seek sealing only of sealable material.” *Id.*

In the context of dispositive motions, materials may be sealed in the Ninth Circuit upon a showing that there are “compelling reasons” to seal the information. *See Kamakana v. City & Cty. Of Honolulu*, 447 F.3d 1172, 1179–80 (9th Cir. 2006). However, a party seeking to seal information in a non-dispositive context, such as for the underlying materials, must show only “good cause.” *Id.* at 1179–80. The rationale for the lower standard with respect to non-dispositive motions is that “the public has less of a need for access to court records attached only to non-dispositive motions because these documents are often unrelated, or only tangentially related, to the underlying cause of action”

1 and that as a result “[t]he public policies that support the right of access to dispositive motions, and
 2 related materials, do not apply with equal force to non-dispositive materials.” *Kamakana*, 447 F.3d
 3 at 1179; *see also TVIIM, LLC v. McAfee, Inc.*, 2015 WL 5116721, at *1 (N.D. Cal. Aug. 28, 2015)
 4 (“Records attached to nondispositive motions are not subject to the strong presumption of access.”)
 5 (citation omitted). Under the “good cause” standard, courts will seal statements reporting on a
 6 company’s users, sales, investments, or other information that is ordinarily kept secret for
 7 competitive purposes. *See Hanginout, Inc. v. Google, Inc.*, 2014 WL 1234499, at *1 (S.D. Cal.
 8 Mar. 24, 2014); *Nitride Semiconductors Co. v. RayVio Corp.*, 2018 WL 10701873, at *1 (N.D. Cal.
 9 Aug. 1, 2018) (granting motion to seal “[c]onfidential and proprietary information regarding
 10 [Defendant]’s products” under “good cause” standard) (Van Keulen, J.). Although the materials that
 11 Google seeks to seal here easily meet the higher “compelling reasons” standard, the Court need only
 12 consider whether these materials meet the lower “good cause” standard because the underlying
 13 materials are not filed in connection with a dispositive motion.

14 **III. THE ABOVE IDENTIFIED MATERIALS SHOULD ALL BE SEALED**

15 Courts have repeatedly found it appropriate to seal documents that contain “business
 16 information that might harm a litigant’s competitive standing.” *Nixon v. Warner Commc’ns, Inc.*,
 17 435 U.S. 589, 589–99 (1978). Good cause to seal is shown when a party seeks to seal materials that
 18 “contain[] confidential information about the operation of [the party’s] products and that public
 19 disclosure could harm [the party] by disclosing confidential technical information.” *Digital Reg of*
 20 *Texas, LLC v. Adobe Sys., Inc.*, 2014 WL 6986068, at *1 (N.D. Cal. Dec. 10, 2014). Materials that
 21 could harm a litigant’s competitive standing may be sealed even under the “compelling reasons”
 22 standard. *See e.g., Icon-IP Pty Ltd. v. Specialized Bicycle Components, Inc.*, 2015 WL 984121,
 23 at *2 (N.D. Cal. Mar. 4, 2015) (information “is appropriately sealable under the ‘compelling
 24 reasons’ standard where that information could be used to the company’s competitive
 25 disadvantage”) (citation omitted). Courts in this district have also determined that motions to seal
 26 may be granted as to potential trade secrets. *See, e.g. United Tactical Sys., LLC v. Real Action*
 27 *Paintball, Inc.*, 2015 WL 295584, at *3 (N.D. Cal. Jan. 21, 2015) (rejecting argument against sealing
 28

1 “that [the party] ha[s] not shown that the substance of the information . . . amounts to a trade
2 secret”).

3 Here, the Joint Exhibit List includes confidential and proprietary information regarding
4 highly sensitive features of Google’s internal systems and operations that Google does not share
5 publicly. Specifically, the information Google seeks to seal includes details related to Google’s
6 internal projects, identifiers, data signals, source code files, and logs, as well as internal metrics.
7 Such information reveals Google’s internal strategies, system designs, and business practices for
8 operating and maintaining many of its important services while complying with its legal and privacy
9 obligations.

10 Public disclosure of the above-listed information would harm Google’s competitive standing
11 it has earned through years of innovation and careful deliberation, by revealing sensitive aspects of
12 Google’s proprietary systems, strategies, and designs to Google’s competitors. That alone is a proper
13 basis to seal such information. *See, e.g., Free Range Content, Inc. v. Google Inc.*, No. 14-cv-02329-
14 BLF, Dkt. No. 192, at 3–9 (N.D. Cal. May 3, 2017) (granting Google’s motion to seal certain
15 sensitive business information related to Google’s processes and policies to ensure the integrity and
16 security of a different advertising system); *Huawei Techs. Co. v. Samsung Elecs. Co.*,
17 No. 3:16-cv-02787, Dkt. No. 446, at 19 (N.D. Cal. Jan. 30, 2019) (sealing confidential sales data
18 because “disclosure would harm their competitive standing by giving competitors insight they do
19 not have”); *Trotsky v. Travelers Indem. Co.*, 2013 WL 12116153, at *8 (W.D. Wash. May 8, 2013)
20 (granting motion to seal as to “internal research results that disclose statistical coding that is not
21 publicly available”).

22 Moreover, if publicly disclosed, malicious actors may use such information to seek to
23 compromise Google’s data logging infrastructure. Google would be placed at an increased risk of
24 cyber security threats. *See, e.g., In re Google Inc. Gmail Litig.*, 2013 WL 5366963, at *3 (N.D. Cal.
25 Sept. 25, 2013) (sealing “material concern[ing] how users’ interactions with the Gmail system
26 affects how messages are transmitted” because if made public, it “could lead to a breach in the
27 security of the Gmail system”). The security threat is an additional reason for this Court to seal the
28 identified information.

The information Google seeks to redact, including details related Google’s internal projects, strategies, identifiers, data signals, source code files, and logs, as well as internal metrics, is the minimal amount of information needed to protect its internal systems and operations from being exposed to not only its competitors but also to nefarious actors who may improperly seek access to and disrupt these systems and operations. The “good cause” rather than the “compelling reasons” standard should apply; but under either standard, Google’s sealing request is warranted.

IV. CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, Google respectfully requests that the Court seal the identified portions of the Joint Exhibit List.

DATED: November 8, 2023

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